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Capital Letter:

Silent Spy or Sleuth

By RUTH MONTGOMERY

WASHINGTON: One of President Kennedy's four top advisers has "gone underground" as far as the public is concerned.

Central Intelligence Director John A. McCone, drafted by JFK to head

our super-spy agency after the Bay of Pigs fiasco, is running such a tight-lipped operation that Defense Secretary Robert McNamara must be green with envy.

While sleuths stalk the Pentagon to determine who leaked what to whom, and Congress screams "news management," McCone has quietly issued a directive for himself and his staff that goes like this:

No interviews. No background briefings. No discussions with the press. No speeches. No public statements.

The total clamp-down by McCone on public information makes his CIA predecessor, Allen Dulles, seem positively garrulous by comparison.

The contrast between the two men goes well beyond that. Dulles, a professional spy off and on since World War I, is a tall, relaxed, outgoing man who puffs perennially on a large collection of pipes. Although he held no press conferences, Dulles gave private background briefings to friendly members of the press, and made several speeches a year.

McCone, a multi-millionaire industrialist who headed the Atomic Energy Commission under President Eisenhower, is short, sharp and something of a martinet.

Anything but relaxed, he is a round-the-clock toiler who maintains two CIA offices and takes his work

home with him at night. Unlike Dulles, who sat on the hush-hush U. S. Intelligence Board as the CIA director, McCone has been elevated to personal representative of the President on the board, while his deputy, Lt. Gen. Marshall Carter, sits in for CIA.

JFK's four chief advisers are his brother, Attorney General Robert Kennedy, McNamara, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, and McCone, probably in that order. Half of these — McNamara and McCone — are Republicans.

No one can accuse McCone of having a hand in McNamara's award of the TFX contract to General Dynamics instead of Boeing Airplane Co. William M. Allen, Boeing's president, was best man at McCone's wedding last August to Mrs. Paul Pigott, whose late husband was a director of Boeing.

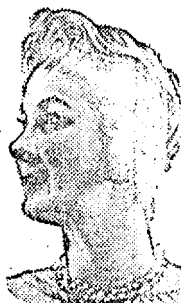
Friends since their undergraduate days at the University of California, McCone married Theiline Pigott after her husband died in January, 1961, and the first Mrs. McCone died that December.

The two couples had adjoining houses at Cap Gay in the Bahamas, and frequently visited each other in Washington and Seattle. Both McCone and Pigott were knighted by Pope Pius XII, and both were directors of Standard Oil of California.

Unquestionably the least publicized traveler in official life, McCone journeys frequently to secret CIA installations here and abroad. Mrs. McCone recently accompanied him on an official mission to England, but even when British newspapers noted their arrival, the CIA refused to confirm it.

Washington is a publicity-mad capital, and for that reason it was somewhat unusual when McCone told his already hush-hush staff: "Become even more anonymous." No one can deny that he is setting the example for them.

(Hearst Headline Service)



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